

# THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO



**TONI ATKINS**  
COUNCILMEMBER  
THIRD DISTRICT

## NEWS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Councilmember Atkins Helps Keep 6 to 6 After-School Program Free

SAN DIEGO--When Third District City Councilmember Toni Atkins first received word that the proposed FY04 city budget would include a proposal to institute a user fee for the city's popular "6 to 6" after-school program, her immediate concern was for low-income and working families who might not be able to afford the new fee.

The proposal called for families who don't qualify for free or reduced-price lunches to pay \$90 for their first child, and \$75 for each additional child in the program. The fee would raise approximately \$400,000 annually to help close the city's \$30 million budget gap for the coming year.

"People would have been forced to take their kids out of the program," said Councilmember Atkins. "A family of four that earns \$1 over the \$25,000 threshold takes home approximately \$1,450 a month, so \$90--and \$75 more for each additional child in the program--would be a difficult, if not impossible, expense to absorb after you pay for rent, food and other expenses."

The proposal was scheduled to come before the Council this past Tuesday, June 17th. So Atkins did what any motivated Councilmember does at budget time, she sat down with City Manager Mike Uberuaga to see if they could find a way to keep the project free for all current users.

By the time the proposal reached the City Council on Tuesday, the concern had been addressed.

"We were able to re-direct some of the funds that had been earmarked to expand the program to 800 new users and instead continue to offer the program to all current users for free," said Atkins. "The good news is that we'll still be able to expand the program to 400 new students this year."

The 6 to 6 program is currently offered to 25,000 students citywide. The city pays teachers and supervisors to provide 90 minutes of programming before school and three hours after school at 202 middle and elementary schools in the city. There is a waiting list of 20,000 students.

"I'm pleased we were able to shift around funds to keep this program free and still expand it to more students," said Atkins. "Hopefully one day we'll be able to provide this program to every student in the district who desires to be a part of it." # # #